

Activities for children under 4



Activities for under 4 year olds

Make your own skittles

You will need:

- Plastic bottles
- Water
- Ball



Activity

Put a small amount of water in the bottom of the water bottles, just enough to weigh them down so they don't blow over. Place the lids on the bottles, line the bottles up and see if the children can knock them down by rolling the ball towards them.

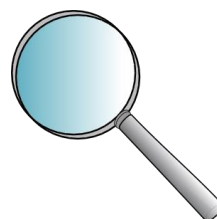
Draw shapes in the dirt with sticks

Use sticks to draw shapes in the dirt – fun and a great way to encourage early writing skills.



Where's it gone?

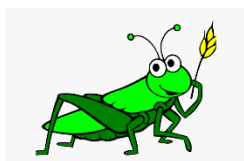
Ask your toddler to pick 3 objects for this game – favourite toys, teddies or household objects such as a wooden spoon would be perfect. Then take them into the garden along with a blanket (on a fine day or inside on a wet day). Lay the 3 items out on the ground, then ask your little one to hide under the blanket while you take 1 away. Which one is missing?



Move like minibeasts

This is a great way to get young children active and help burn off some excess energy. You can do it outdoors or inside. Challenge your child/ren to;

- Lie on the ground and wriggle like a worm
- Flap their arms like a butterfly flutters its wings
- Put their hands on the floor and scuttle about like a spider
- Do some giant leaps like a cricket
- Crawl on the floor then curl up into a ball like a woodlouse



Butterfly symmetry art

This craft has the wow factor!

You will need

- Paint
- Paper



Simply splodge paint on one half of your paper and fold it in half so the paint spreads on both sides. Carefully open it up to reveal a beautiful butterfly.

It's also a great way to teach children about butterflies and how their wings are symmetrical.

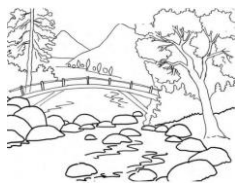


Daily Walk, Painted Pebbles and Nature table

The most beautiful treasures are found under the open sky; a daily walk is really good for the overall development of children and beneficial for everyone's wellbeing.

To help observe the seasons and collect natural treasures full of wonder, you can create a nature table in your home. Cover a small table, stool or box with a beautiful cloth. Cut a branch with spring blossom, or buds, or young leaves etc and put it in a vase nearby out of reach of little ones. Place an interesting looking log on top of your table to keep the cloth in place. Add gems from your daily walks. Children might have found some treasures, such as some wool left in a hedgerow by sheep, pebbles which you can paint at home and display on your nature table, once dry, pine cones, and so on. This can be changed according to the seasons and is a wonderful first way to observe nature's changes and its living things.

This activity is good whatever the weather, little ones love welly walks and splashing in puddles. Remember waterproofs, wellies, sunhats, coats, gloves, etc, to make it appropriate to the season.



An old time favourite, playing Poohsticks

A very calming game children love. Try walking via a small stream or bridge on your daily walk. Pick up sticks along the way. Either throw in a stream and watch it float away or play Pooh sticks by throwing a stick into the water on the one side of the bridge (upstream) than go the the other side of the bridge and watch the stick emerge from under the bridge and float away on the water.

Be mindful of traffic when crossing the bridge and keep children away from the water's edge!





Wendy House, Super Simple:

You will need a large cardboard box for this, scissors, a marking pen and crayons, paint and paintbrushes.

Place the box with the opening face down. Mark and cut out windows and a door on the sides of box. Decorate the box, you can draw trailing plants and flowers for example.

A great play house for indoors or for in the garden on a dry day. Have fun!



Wonderful World of Clay and Sticks

You will need: clay, sticks, pebbles, grass, leaves, moss, and gaffer tape. 'The Gruffalo' book by Julia Donaldson.

- 1) Read 'the Gruffalo'. Make your own clay as per the recipe below, or use any arts of crafts clay. Create your own Gruffalo by taping two sticks into a cross shape for the body and arms. Model a round ball, which is going to be the head and put on top of the 'cross stick'. Can you create terrible teeth in its terrible jaws and terrible eyes and terrible claws? You can use any natural materials you can find, such as pebbles, sticks, grass for hair, etc.
- 2) Modelling Monsters or faces. Take your clay outdoors and model monster faces on trees. Look for interesting parts on the tree or bark that could become part of the face, i.e. a nose or an eye. Complete the face with your clay. Alternatively, children can model any shape on the tree with their clay and decorate with whatever they can find, such as sticks or pebbles or moss. Enjoy! Remember to wash hands thoroughly afterwards!



Clay

2 cups of water

Food colouring (optional)

3 ½ cups of any type of flour

½ cup of salt

1 tbsp cream of tartar or corn flour/polenta or ground cornflakes.

2 ½ tbsp of cooking oil

Baking sheet (optional)

You will need a large bowl, a wooden spoon, a pan and an airtight container to keep the clay in!

Method:

Bring water to the boil in a pan and add food colouring. Remove from heat.

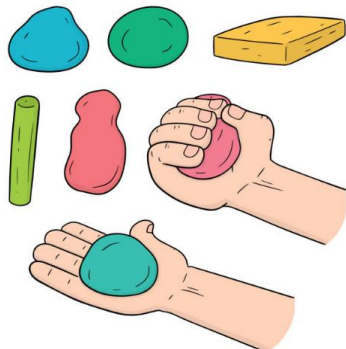
Mix together flour, salt and cream of tartar

Add the oil to the water

Make a dip in the flour and carefully start adding the water mixture to the flour mixture and stir together with a wooden spoon.

Let it sit until it has cooled down, make sure it is still slightly warm.

Knead the flour until pliable, you could do this on a surface covered with a baking sheet.)



Create a Treasure Basket

Treasure Baskets are a wonderful way to stimulate the senses. This is suitable for under 4s and over, and from 6 months old (once babies that can sit up unaided). Make sure to sit close to your baby/child in order to observe them.

You will need a basket, preferably from natural woven material, yet if you do not have a small basket or tub, you could also put the contents in a tote bag, as long as the basket or bag is not too deep, so babies and children can reach in easily. Objects, preferably natural, but a range of everyday household objects will do:

Younger children and babies:

Orange, Lemon, Lime, Pomegranate

Kitchen roll and toilet paper Cardboard Tubes,

Pumice stone, Loofah, Wooden curtain rings, tie on some ribbons!

Natural Sponge

Pine Cone

Large Feather

Small Handheld Mirror (ie wooden)

Shells

Large Pompom

Teddy

Rollig Pin

Chopping sticks/Sticks

Wooden Cooking Spoons, Small Pan with Lid,

Tennis Ball

Baby's Hair Brush

Wool (in Springtime, look out for fields with sheep and check the hedgerows, there should be wool stuck to bushes you can collect).

Additional items for Older Children:

Bay Leaves, dried herbs in a drawstring bag*,

dried spices in a drawstring bag, such as cardamom pods, cloves, star anise

Tea bags with interesting smells, ie peppermint

Coffee beans in a drawstring bag.

(*If you don't have drawstring bags, use a jar and put some material over the top held in place with an elastic band or hammer holes in the jar lid, so children can smell what is inside).

You can make a themed basket, ie 'baby' and place baby items in the basket, such as a bottle, a body grow, a nappy, a rattle.

Or 'We're going to the seaside basket' (towel, spade, bucket, sunglasses, swimming costume, shorts and place it in a sandpit)

A 'safari basket', make binoculars from toilet roll tubes, find a hat and safari animal toys.



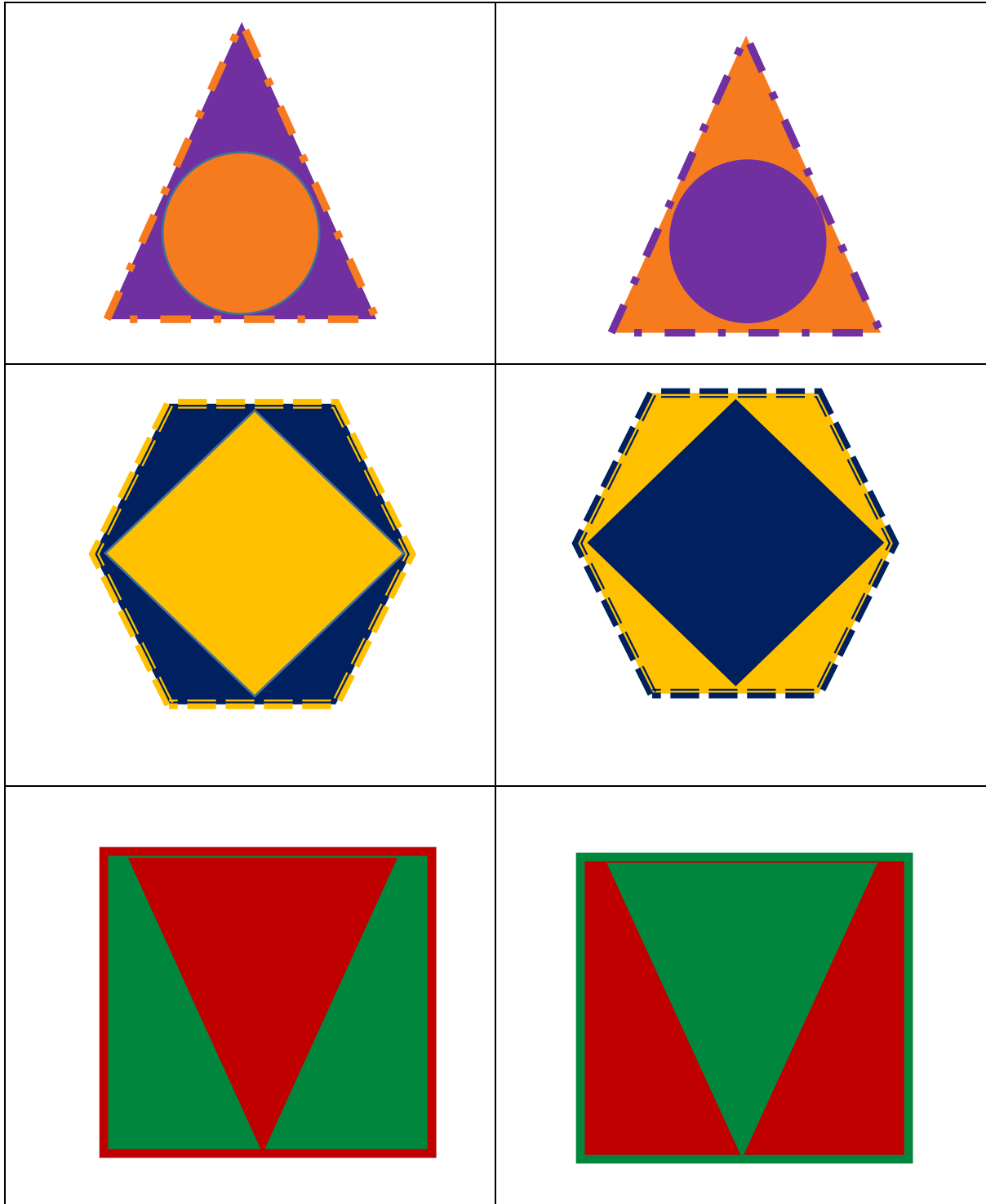
Use your imagination! Have Fun!



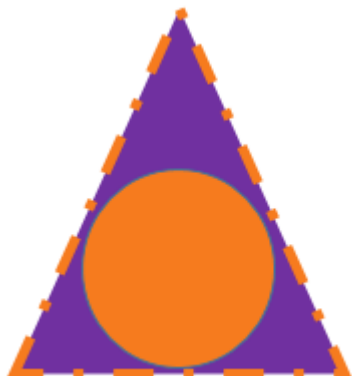
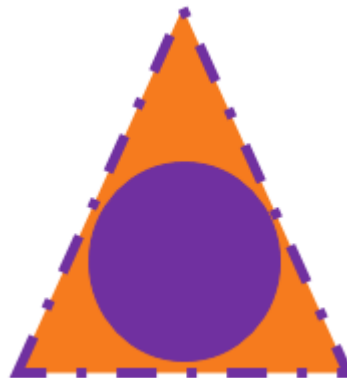
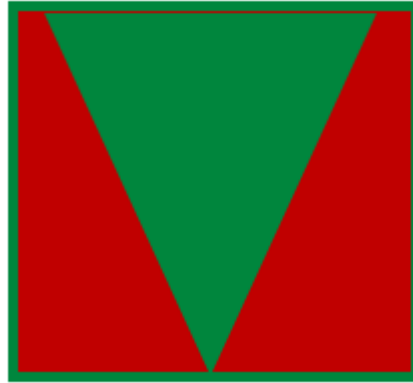
Matching Shapes and Colours

Can you cut out the shapes and place them on the board, on top of the same shape and colour?

Board



Shapes to cut out and match



Outdoor colour hunt

What you need

A piece of card – side of a box or a piece of paper
Paint, crayon, coloured pencil or felt pen



What to do

Using your paint, crayon, coloured pencil or felt pen, make some colour splodges on your card or paper spaced slightly apart.

During your daily exercise time, go for walk or hunt around the garden for things that match the colours on the card.

Lockdown handprint keepsake

What you need

Paper
Paint
Brush
Scissors
Photo frame



What to do

Choose your colour scheme from your coloured paints available

Brush the paint onto your little one's hand and print down onto the paper

Repeat for anyone else you would like to include

Allow to dry and cut out

If you have a spare photo frame you can display them there starting with the biggest handprint.

You can caption with a Title e.g. Isolation is time spent together 2020 or when the world stayed apart this was our favourite place to be, Lockdown 2020